

**James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, August 31,  
1783. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,  
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,  
1900-1910.**

**TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.**

Philada., Aug. 11th. 1783.

My Dear Sir, —At the date of my letter in April I expected to have had the pleasure by this time of being with you in Virginia. My disappointment has proceeded from several dilatory circumstances on which I had not calculated. My journey to Virga. tho' still somewhat contingent in point of time cannot now be very long postponed. I need not I trust renew my assurance that it will not finally stop on this side of Monticello.

The reserve of our foreign Ministers still leaves us the sport of misinformations concerning the def: Treaty. We all thought a little time ago that it had certainly arrived at N. York. This opinion however has become extinct, and we are thrown back on the newspaper evidence which as usual is full of contradictions. The probability seems to be that the delay arises from discussions with the Dutch. Mr. Dana has been sorely disappointed in the event of his announcing himself to the Court of Russia. His written communications obtain verbal answers only & these hold up the Mediation to which the Empress, with the Emperor of G[erman]y have been invited as a bar to any overt transaction with the U. S. and even suggest the necessity of new powers from the latter

of a date subsequent to the acknowledgment of their Sovereignty by G. B. Having not seen the letters from Mr. Dana myself, I give this idea of them at second hand, remarking at the same time that it has been taken from such passages only as were not in Cypher;

## Library of Congress

the latter being not yet translated. Congs. remain at Princeton utterly undecided both as to their ultimate seat and their intermediate residence. Very little business of moment has been yet done at the new Metropolis, except a ratification of the Treaty with Sweden. In particular nothing has been done as to a foreign establishment. With regard to an internal peace establishment, though it has been treated with less inattention, it has undergone little discussion. The Commander-in-Chief has been invited to Princeton with a view to obtain his advice and sanction to the military branches of it, and is every day expected there. The Budget of Congs. is likely to have the fate of many of their other propositions to the States. Delaware is the only one among those which have bestowed a consideration on it that has acceded in toto. Several Legislatures have adjourned without giving even that mark of their condescension. In the Southern States a jealousy of Congressional usurpations is likely to be the bane of the system: in the Eastern an aversion to the half-pay provided for by it. New Jersey & Maryland have adopted the impost, the other funds recommended being passed for one year only by one of these States, and postponed by the other. Pa. has hitherto been friendly to liberal and foederal ideas and will continue so, unless the late jar with Congs. sd give a wrong bias of which there is some danger. Massts. has in the election of Delegates for the ensuing year stigmatized the concurrence of those now in place, in the provision for half-pay, by substituting a new representation; and has sent a Memorial to Congs. which I am told is pregnant with the most penurious ideas not only on that subject but on several others which concern the national honor & dignity. This picture of our affairs is not a flattering one; but we have been witnesses of so many cases in which evils & errors have been the parents of their own remedy, that we cannot but view it with consolations of hope. Remind Miss Patsy of my affection for her & be assured that I am Dr. Sir

Yr. Sincere friend